



State Rehabilitation Council

Nebraska Department of Education
301 Centennial Mall South • PO Box 94987 • Lincoln, NE 68509

Developmental Services of Nebraska

2610 West M Court
Lincoln, NE
402-435-2800

October 18, 2005
10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

MINUTES

Present: *Sharon Bloechle, Kim Boyce, Don Crouch, Eileen Curry, Linda Douglas, Alvin Fox, Gayle Hahn, Sandy Ham, Marc Hultine, David Jelinek, Les Kimmons, Frank Lloyd, Michael Newman, Kipp Ransom, Susan Rocker, Mark Schultz, Pearl Van Zandt, and Merwyn Vavrina*

Absent: *Vicki Rasmussen*

Minutes by *Cheryle Adams*

Gayle Hahn called the meeting to order

I Public Comment: None

II. New Member

- A. New member, Kipp Ransom—worked for Vocational Rehabilitation in the Lincoln office for 4 1/2 years as a Rehab Specialist/Evaluator. He is currently working for Madonna as a counselor.
- B. Alvin Fox—is from McCool Junction and is representing SILC. He served on this board two terms before and has also served on the Assistive Technology Board.

III. Approval of Agenda

Gayle asked that the IPE notebook presentation by Dennis King and Janet Drudik be after the Director's report. Linda moved that the agenda be approved with the change. Alvin seconded. The motion passed, agenda approved.

IV. Approval of Minutes from August 9, 2005

Motion made by Les approve the minutes to include the two page revision that was mailed out. Linda seconded. Motion passed the August 9, 2005 minutes were approved.

V. Director's Report (*Frank Lloyd*)

1. Frank mentioned that Linda Douglas will be a big help when looking at transition. Jack Shepard is now working full time for Voc Rehab. He will be assisting with transition. He will be 90% Voc 10% SPED. This will allow us to maintain partnership with SPED.
2. Mark will be meeting with Frank and Margy to discuss better ways that VR can connect with assistive technology. This is a unique service for people with disabilities. We have one of the best programs in the country and VR needs to connect with that program. The NEAT center has also merged with his program.
3. Frank discussed VR's commitment to people with physical disabilities. In the 9-10 years an enormous effort has been made to serve consumers with mental illnesses and cognitive disabilities. These groups have their own advocacy groups. Consumers with physical disabilities don't have a clear group representing them. Dennis and Margy will be going to Madonna to discuss what VR can do to develop a partnership between Madonna and VR. VR currently has a partnership with Alegent and will try to develop partnerships with other rehabilitation programs. VR wants to work more closely with consumers that experience a physical disability.
4. Process Management—interaction with consumers. Develop processes that will have an uniform application of the program around the state. This is a way VR can get the knowledge and expertise standardized. Frank distributed the mock up of the new consumer folder. It is plain white with VR's logo embossed on the front. Inside it has the eight steps of what the consumer can expect from VR. On the bottom right is VR's five-point promise. On the other side CAP's phone number is listed along with the five ways a consumer can help us to help them become successfully employed. On the back is VR's logo along with website information. This will be required to give to a consumer. It gives a framework for information, giving a consistent message to consumers.

Les made a suggestion of changing the word “problems” to needs. Through discussing their needs we will find out he problems.

5. IPE process. VR has been working on structuring this in the last two years. The law requires us to do certain things and needs to be applied uniformly around the state. This process has been modified many times and we have been using the three-ring notebook has been used for the last 11 months. This is a way of standardizing/developing best practice for the IPE process. Based on the feedback we have been getting, the new process will be much different. There are seven major objectives. When the consumer leaves with the booklet it has been designed to fit in the folder.
 - A. Require less reading and writing by consumers, but balance this with more involvement by staff.
 - B. Limit the booklet to those activities that consumers could work on without staff assistance. For example: “Services and Benefits” and “Cost-Sharing” worksheets were removed. These and other forms will be introduced later by staff.

- C. Eliminate NCR copies. Consumers didn't want the information. We don't need NCR for data entry. Copies can be made if needed. The completed booklet will be kept in case file for Job Seeking Skills class.
- D. Develop a better integration of the IPE planning activities with the Job Seeking Skills booklet—"Finding the Job that Works for You." Work history, job skills, training, etc. are used in picking a job goal as well as preparing application and practicing for a job interview.
- E. Retain the instructional framework for consumers and newer staff; i.e., the value of the activities are mentioned at the beginning of each activity. This helps when consumers complete the booklet on their own as well as when staff "walk" the consumer through the activities.
- F. Retain the key activities that are needed to help a person make a vocational choice. It also helps consumers match important factors such as work interests, work values, work preferences, work considerations, training job skills, job history and support network. Two former activities were combined with the work consideration activity and the job seeking skills activity was eliminated. This reduced the activities from 14 to 8.
- G. Eliminate the 3-ring binder. The booklet is for consumers. The 3-ring binder was designed to keep all IEP planning documents—those for the consumers and for staff.

VI. Old Business

1. Annual report progress (*Sandy Ham*)

Sandy has assembled the routine information needed for the annual report, i.e.; the current listing of membership, office locations including the new Fremont office.

The committee reports have been submitted and are ready. She is currently working on the client success stories. Last year there were twelve published. Sandy still needs Gayle's letter and Frank's report.

She is pleased with the progress. The person doing the graphics has been very responsive and she is optimistic that her move to another state won't be an obstacle.

VII. New Business

A. TBI Project Report (*Keri Bennett*)

In 1995 VR commissioned a study by Hanna Keelan Associates titled: "Assessment of the Employment and Vocational Rehabilitation Services Needs of Persons Disabled by Head Injuries."

The 2002 NE State Plan for Systematic Services for Individuals with Brain Injuries and Their Families" was developed by the Traumatic Brain Injury Council. They

recommended that a pilot program be created to implement the findings of the 1995 study. The pilot would demonstrate the viability of several employment alternatives:

- Self employment
- Work at home or telecommuting
- Employment in small businesses
- Employment in the community with appropriate long-term follow-up.

In July 2005 VR met with Developmental Services of Nebraska (DSN and Goodwill Industries to discuss staff training needs, expected outcomes and quarterly reporting requirements. They began looking for a qualified mentor/trainer from an already established TBI program in another state.

In August 2005, DSN and Goodwill Industries hired full time directors for their TBI programs. DSN Joe Kelly—Master Level came from Madonna and Mary Ann Mertz GoodWill has a Ph D. and came from Good Samaritan Hospital.

On September 13th and “Introductory TBI training for Service Providers” was held at Goodwill Industries of Greater Nebraska in Grand Island, NE. Training was provided by the Michigan TBI Infrastructure grant and modified for use in Nebraska by Pam Brown, Mary Ann Mertz and Keri Bennett.

“Positive Behavior Supports for Individuals with Brain Injuries” training was held at DSN in Lincoln on September 22, 2005. This was presented by Linda Wilkerson, Technical Assistance Coordinator of the Neurologic Disabilities Support Project in Kansas and Jeff Krutz of Nebraska ATP. Funding was provided by the Nebraska TBI Infrastructure grant.

They are currently reviewing evaluations from the training events and coordinating further training/mentoring. The goals is to connect with agencies that have already made the transition from serving only developmental disabled or behavioral health-impaired persons to incorporate appropriate services for people with brain injuries.

DSN to work with consumer they already serve and then expand from there. Goodwill will take referrals from VR. Goodwill Industries and VR frontline staff in Grand Island met to discuss goals for the pilot, to outline the referral process and to began identifying potential referrals.

B. Recruitment (Gayle Hahn/Don Crouch)

Ask the subcommittees next time—about coming up with names for recruiting new members. The committee needs members with disabilities. There are a couple of excellent people wanting to be on the council, but they can’t be added them till we fill the spots open for those with disabilities.

We are holding two applications and Don knows another excellent person that is interested, but hasn’t applied as yet.

C. Post Secondary Training Payment (Don Crouch)

Prior to five years ago VR paid the post-secondary institution directly in the behalf of the consumer. Several years ago, there was a national push for choice and to have the consumers become responsible—giving the money directly to the individual to let them use the money how they saw fit as long as it was towards school/school related items.

This was originally brought before the council several years ago and concerns were expressed about giving the money directly to the consumer. A compromise was reached at that time; the first year we would give the students part of the money to buy books and the rest would be authorized to the school. After the first year the money would be given directly to the student.

Don informed the council that there hasn't been any misuse of funds to his knowledge. No auditors have questioned giving the consumer the money directly. VR gets the school registration information up front showing the classes they are enrolled in. VR also receives a grade report verifying they have completed the courses outlined. He recommends that we revise the policy and give the money to the first year students allowing them to pay for their books and tuition up front.

This would be an option for the consumer, if the consumer wants the money to be sent directly to the school VR would still do that.

Sharon made a motion to give the money to the consumer for post secondary education. Pearl seconded the motion. The motion is approved.

D. IPE Notebook (*Dennis King/Janet Drudik*)

Janet Drudik and Dennis King distributed the new “Discover the Job that Works for You” booklet. This will replace the notebooks that are currently being used. This is a draft—Sandy worked on getting these photocopied in order to share with the council. This is pretty close to what it will look like before going to press. Don, Janet and Dennis will be going out in December to train the VR teams on how to use the new booklet.

The inside has the customer service statement—“Our Commitment to You”. This is more personable to the consumer, easier to understand. This has been reduced from 122 pages to a total of 44 pages.

Page 2 has been added to let the consumer know how this booklet will help them, that VR staff is available to assist them in completing the booklet and that the activities in the booklet are not a test. This is about them and their work preferences. The consumer will get this booklet after the employment discussion.

There are five steps.

Janet presented on Step 1 “Find out About You and Work”.

This is gathering information about the consumer's work interests, work values, work preferences, work considerations, training, job skills, job history and their

support network. The consumer can work on this step themselves or if they need assistance a staff person will help them.

There are nine sections within Step 1.

Work Interests—to help identify occupational interests.

Work Values—to help the consumer consider what they value in a job.

Work Preferences—identifying the work tasks and conditions that are preferred.

Included in this section is a statement to make the consumer aware that self-employment is an option.

Work Consideration—where and when the consumer wants to work, salary, etc.

Training—review of consumer's education, licenses, certificates and specialized training.

Job Skills—identifies the skills the consumer has and may want to use on the next job.

Job History—creates a record of past jobs, duties and personal qualities.

Support Network—creates a list of people that the consumer can rely on for support.

Where Do I Go from Here?—Consumer will meet with staff

Dennis discussed the development of the plan. When developing the plan staff will compare the information the consumer completed in the discover activities section to flush out key components. Staff will be looking at all the information deciding whether there are enough supports to support the job goal.

Step 2 through 5 will be completed with the specialist working with the consumer.

Step 2: “Pick the Job you Want”. This deals with career exploration. This section lists the various activities that a consumer can use to help them decide on a job goal. If they come in with a job goal in mind—a verified job goal that they are able to achieve, the consumer would proceed to step 3.

Step 3: “Make Sure this Job is Right for You”. This will compare the job that was selected with what the consumer verified as being important in Step 1. This section targets specific information in order to assess what supports the consumer needs in order to be supported in the selected job goal. This step summarizes everything.

Step 4: “Get the Resources You Need”. This section helps the consumer and VR staff identify the services that will be needed in order to reach the job goal.

Step 5: “Develop your Plan for Action”. Once the job goal is identified and the services and resources that are needed, they will meet with VR staff to write the Individual Plan for Employment. The significant change here was that the cost sharing service forms and the benefits worksheet were removed from the booklet. Information concerning the Hotline for Disability Services was included in this section.

A question was asked about piloting this to a small group. Frank stated that VR has been doing this working on this process for several years. This isn't a new process—this is a revision. VR started doing the process of continuous

improvement 1 ½ years ago. Feedback has been gathered over that time which has led to this revision.

This is not appropriate for students that are in transition. Once they have been moved to the employment program, they will then complete a booklet. The larger schools already have evaluation and career planning activities in place. With approval of IDEA they are required to write goals for post high school.

Janet mentioned that her and Dennis had the first rough draft of materials in 2001 and piloted it in 2002.

Merwyn made a motion that the council to support the changes to the new notebook. Sandy seconds the motion. The motion is approved.

E. Display of SRC website (Cheryle Adams)—postponed

F. Showing of RCEP/VR Videos (Don Crouch)—Will be presented at the next meeting

VIII. Reports

A. CAP Reports (*Vicki Rasmussen*)

Vicki not present. The printed CAP report was mailed to council members earlier.

B. SILC Report (*Alvin Fox*)

Funding was approved by SILC for an educational project to be completed by September 20th targeting the CILs, individuals and organizations within the psychiatric community drawing upon materials from the Nebraska Summit and the book; “On Our Own Together”.

The council discussed the Voting Conference. Kathy, the Executive Director, reviewed a proposal made by the Holiday Inn. The idea was forwarded that they give the appearance that the conference has a large base of support.

C. ATP Report (*Mark Schultz*)

Mark mentioned that referrals for ATP services is up from last year. Last year they averaged 120-150 referrals. This year 214. ATP has changed their approach by having a person from their team meet with the team early on in the process discussing the equipment/technology that is available.

The equipment drive to assist the victims of hurricane Katrina was a success. Nebraska was contacted by their sister programs in Mississippi and Louisiana. ATP collected more than 500 pieces of equipment/three truck loads. They received over 100 wheelchairs, 30 hospital beds, six scooters along with walkers, and other equipment. There were a couple of trucking companies that volunteered to move the

equipment between sights bringing it to Lincoln. Another trucking company moved the equipment to the southern states.

Mark discussed the merge with the NEAT center. NEAT provides equipment and technical assistance to schools/school-aged children. This will help VR coordinate services in the area of transition. The NEAT center will continue operating in the locations that are currently established.

ATP is progressing with the “housing” database. This will give a listing of affordable and accessible housing in Nebraska. The site will have links to other services and supports that are available in the requested area. This will also give a listing of affordable housing that is readily available based on needs/information that was inputted. This will be updated very two weeks. Economic Development will be funding the continuation of the program. Mark would like to have this program fully operational by the end of January.

D. Committee Reports

Client Services Committee (*Les Kimmons*)

Asking for couple of carry over items annual report—that is in good shape. The main topic of discussion was the survey concerning the IPE booklet and the significant changes that have been made. The committee applauds the new booklet. They were very pleased with Dennis and Janet’s presentation. The current survey doesn’t really apply and the committee is looking at revising the survey to focus on consumer satisfaction and how the booklet is of value to the consumer. The questions will be relevant to the new booklet. There will be training on the new booklet in December and then they will start looking at referrals after January.

Frank commented that on a national level only about 50% drop out before the plan is completed successfully. The national standard only requires 52% to be successfully employed. The new IPE booklet is our attempt on lowering that number. Through the federal standards measurement is the drop out rate. The booklet is not intended to help consumer feel more satisfied with VR. The real issue is what can VR to do reduce the amount spent on consumers who don’t reach a successful completion (employment). Anything VR can to do to reduce the drop out rate would cause consumer satisfaction to go up.

The committee discussed the issue on how to distribute the survey. Merwyn suggested that VR should ask the consumer up front if they have access to a computer and if they have an email address. It was noted that the email address info has been included in the new booklet on page 11.

E. Employer Services Committee (*Eileen Curry*)

Jim Coyle met with the committee to discuss the trend across the state and where he is seeing the need. They discussed developing a statewide network of employers across the state that would meet on a quarterly basis.

The committee is committed to making employers aware of VR and to have them consider VR first for staffing needs. How can VR help employers as a viable competitor, whether this be on a statewide, regional or even city to city level? They have lots of ideas to build on. There are 14 employment teams with 11 field offices. This includes the Fremont and O'Neill offices.

Don mentioned that he thought this committee might find employers that would want to be on the council. It is preferred to find an employer with a disability.

F. Transition Services Committee (Linda Douglas)

Frank and Jack Shepard met with them. There needs to be more emphasis placed on the 14-15 year olds and the transition program. The committee discussed a wide range of topics and ideas. Jack will be going out to schools, coordinating and reviewing survey information.

They discussed the packet and the minimum transition requirements. Those areas will be reevaluated and addressed once the surveys have been reviewed.

Don will make the training videos available for viewing at the next meeting. Interested council members can view these at 9:30 on December 6th and 9:30 on February 14th. There are four videos, 10 minutes each.

Eileen motioned to adjourn the meeting. Les seconded. The meeting was adjourned.